

*How did Norway develop during the 20th century? Students should discuss the most important political and economic transformations during this period.*

The twentieth century for Norway began with a new economic depression. But by analyzing global trends in the economy, it is becoming clear that the crisis is almost always followed by a period of economic growth. Norway was not an exception to this. The first achievement of the country was the restoration of full political independence.

On June 7, 1905, the Norwegian Storting (parliament) proclaimed that the Swedish king could no longer do his duty to the Norwegian people. On August 13 a referendum was organized in Norway, in which 368,208 people voted for the dissolution of the union and 187 voted against it.

On October 26, 1905, in Karlstad, Swedish Foreign Minister Fredrik Wachtmeister and Norwegian Foreign Minister Jorgen Levelland signed a treaty to terminate the union. The Norwegian Storting invited the Danish prince Charles of the Glucksburg dynasty to the throne. The king changed his name to the ancient Norwegian Håkon.

This event was also followed by the beginning of accelerated industrial development and its transformation into an industrial-agrarian country. In the 1900s, Norway began to use hydroelectric power on a large scale. This opened up opportunities for the active development of new industries: chemical, non-ferrous metallurgy, and electrometallurgy (production of aluminum, nickel, and ferroalloys). During 1905-1916 the volume of industrial production grew by more than 80%.

At the beginning of the century, the Norwegian fleet was supplemented by steamships, and whaling ships began to fish in Antarctic waters.

Steamships and boats were too expensive for ordinary fishermen, and therefore became a threat to their trade. Fortunately, steamboats were soon replaced by fairly reliable gasoline engines. People were even able to mount them on sailboats. For the next 15 years, things got better and better every year. Motorboats made the work of sailors much easier. They became more agile and they became better equipped. That attracted a lot of investment in the field.

The internal political situation in the country also had its successes. For a long time in government, the Liberal Party was in power, which introduced a set of social reforms, including the introduction of freedom of religion, state insurance from accidents at work and sickness, approval of the official status of the Norwegian language, giving

men and women common voting rights and passing laws to restrict foreign capital investment.

During World War I, Norway maintained neutrality and used it to the advantage of its economy. Thus, by 1917 the number of joint-stock companies rose to 8.7 thousand; the number of Norwegian commercial banks during 1914-1918 years increased by 75 and made share capital - from 77 to 510 million kroner, income from ships during 1914-1916 years increased from 211 million kroner to more than 1 billion crowns. At the same time rising prices on goods, essential for the common people, led to the first general strike in the history of Norway on 06.06.1917, after which the wages in some sectors were raised and the government took action to regulate prices. In the spring of 1918, Norway established an eight-hour workday.

Even though Norway was neutral, Norwegian sailors sailed on Allied ships during World War I to break the blockade organized by German submarines. In appreciation of Norway's support, the Entente countries in 1920 gave it sovereignty over the Svalbard (Spitsbergen) archipelago. Wartime anxieties helped bring about reconciliation with Sweden, and Norway subsequently played a more active role in international life through the League of Nations.

The interwar period in domestic politics was marked by the growing influence of the socialist Norwegian Labor Party, founded in 1887. In 1928 a member of the DNA, Christopher Hornsrud, first became head of the government. A second government led by a DNA member (Jugan Nygorsvold, 1935-1945) carried out a number of social reforms. These included the doubling of social spending in Norway during 1935-1940; the introduction of nine days of paid annual leave for all workers and employees; the approval of a new unemployment benefits law in 1936, covering 500,000 wage earners; and the adoption of a pension law in 1936 for people over 70 with no source of income. The technical overhaul of basic industries in Norway allowed its electrometallurgy industry in 1930 to provide more than 10% of world aluminum production, and the fishing fleet to increase its fish catch to 1 million tons annually in the late 1930s.

The socialist government of Norway expected that strict adherence to neutrality would save the country from war. On May 31, 1938, the Storting declared Norway's right to maintain full and unconditional neutrality in any war, and on September 16, 1938, Norway's representative to the League of Nations gave reasons for its refusal to observe the provision of the League Charter concerning the application of sanctions against an aggressor country in matters of dispute between nations. Believing that

Germany did not threaten Norway, the Norwegian government rejected Berlin's offer of a non-aggression pact on May 17, 1939. At the same time, Oslo refused to discuss assistance to Norway from Britain and France in the event of a possible German or Soviet attack. But time has shown that such a decision was wrong.

During World War II Norway was occupied by German troops. On April 9, 1940, Germany suddenly attacked Norway. The country was taken by complete surprise. Only in the Oslo-fjord area were the Norwegians able to offer stubborn resistance to the enemy thanks to reliable defensive fortifications. For three weeks German troops were scattered in the interior of the country, preventing the individual units of the Norwegian army from uniting. The port city of Narvik in the far north was recaptured by the Germans after a few days, but allied support proved insufficient, and when Germany undertook offensive operations in Western Europe, allied troops had to be evacuated. The king and government fled to Great Britain, where they continued to run the merchant navy, small infantry units, the navy, and the air force. The Storting gave the king and the government authority to lead the country from abroad. In addition to the ruling DNA, members of other parties were brought into the government to strengthen it.

From September 1940, after a brief period of cooperation with the Norwegian bourgeois forces, the German occupiers switched to a policy of fascization of Norway. The Norwegian economy worked in the interest of the Third Reich. The occupation regime was established in Norway, and the Nazis, having abolished the monarchy, allowed the leader of the extreme right-wing Norwegian party "Nasjonal Samling", the former Norwegian Minister of Defense Vidkun Quisling to head the government. His name has gone down in history as a symbol of collaborationism in World War II.

Since the summer of 1940, public disobedience against the country's fascist policies began in Norway. Teachers, theater actors, priests, etc. were involved. In the summer of 1941, an illegal social movement called the Resistance arose in Norway, which coordinated with the government in exile. In the spring of 1941, an armed resistance movement called Milorg was formed out of officers discharged from the Norwegian army. The civilian and military Resistance movements avoided guerrilla warfare, preferring the distribution of illegal press (up to 300,000 copies a month in 1943) and refusal to carry out the orders of the occupying administration, although occasionally, the Milorg and the Communist Party carried out diversions against the occupiers. In addition, the Norwegian merchant fleet, operating under the emigrating government, provided up to 40 percent of the shipping between the United States and Great Britain. Total Norwegian casualties in the war were 10,000, including 3,600 dead merchant marine sailors and 2,000 members of the Resistance movement. More than 20

thousand Norwegians were in concentration camps. The liberation of Norway began from the North: in October 1944 parts of the Soviet armies released a part of the Norwegian Finnmark. Parts of the Wehrmacht in Norway and the Quislingist police surrendered to the Allies without a fight on May 8, 1945, after which the 40,000-strong Milorga army, which had emerged from the underground, took over the guard.

In the early post-war years, Norway showed the same commitment to the UN as it had shown to the League of Nations before the war. However, the atmosphere of the Cold War put the Nordic defense treaty on the agenda, which unfortunately did not succeed. The question of safety continued to be an issue, and so Norway joined NATO from the very beginning of its founding in 1949.

In the first elections after the Norwegian liberation in 1945, the Labour Party won a majority for the first time and remained in power for 20 years. During this period the electoral system was transformed by the abolition of the constitutional article giving 2/3 of the seats in the Storting to members from the country's countryside. The regulatory role of the state was expanded to nationwide planning. State control over the prices of goods and services was introduced.

In the 1960s, Norway established strong ties with the EEC countries, especially Germany. However, many Norwegians opposed accession to the common market, fearing competition from European countries in fisheries, shipbuilding, and other sectors of the economy. In 1972, in a general referendum, the question of Norway's participation in the EEC was resolved in the negative

In the 1960s Norway proclaimed national sovereignty over all offshore natural resources and signed sea boundary agreements with Great Britain and Denmark. In 1965 the first oil licenses were issued, and in December 1969 the first major field was discovered. Industrial oil production in Norway began in 1970. In 1972 the state company Statoil was established for direct state participation in oil and gas production. In addition, since 1965 the development of the shelf was involved in the state-controlled joint stock company "Norsk Hydro". Development of the Norwegian shelf was carried out by consortia with the participation of private companies and the state. Since 1975 Norway began to export oil. Growing revenues from the sale of hydrocarbons allowed Norway to borrow externally against future oil and gas revenues to support other industries, notably shipbuilding, and social and regional development programs. But by 1970, the country's foreign debt had reached 30% of GDP, after which urgent measures were taken to eliminate it. Norway's foreign debt was fully repaid by 2005.

Norway is active in international cooperation, especially in dealing with the situation in the Middle East. In 1998, Gro Harlem Brundtland was appointed director general of the World Health Organization. Jens Stoltenberg acted as UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Therefore, it is possible to summarize. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the country was engaged in nation-building, then it had to endure all the hardships of war, and then the country took an active part in European and world politics in the maintenance of peace. A clear example of this is the comprehensive support of Ukraine during the full-scale invasion of Russia. Norway's current policy is aimed at supporting a long working-class tradition that combines social democratic and liberal values. This approach stimulates industrial development while simultaneously encouraging state intervention in the economy and enhancing the general welfare through heavy taxes. The country, which values its independence, is strict on alcohol and has not given up whaling, which has been practiced here for centuries, especially in the north. Norway has one of the highest quality of life in the world in terms of education, income, and life expectancy, and, according to the World Economic Forum, the second highest for gender equality.